

DATE ISSUED: September 10, 2003

REPORT NO: 201

ATTENTION: Park and Recreation Board, Agenda of September 18, 2003

SUBJECT: Balboa Park Parking, Circulation and Land Use Study

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY - NO ACTION REQUIRED.

BACKGROUND

In June of 2002, the City Park and Recreation Department received funding to initiate a study to evaluate long-term parking, circulation and land use needs for the Central Mesa and Inspiration Point areas of Balboa Park. The study would also include recommendations for the location of parking structures within the park. The study is considered to be the first step in the update of the Central Mesa Precise Plan and the Inspiration Point Precise Plan.

The Park and Recreation Department issued a Request for Qualifications to solicit planning and design firms for the implementation of the parking, circulation and land use study. A total of seven consulting firms were interviewed for the project. The interview panel unanimously selected the consulting team of Jones and Jones Architects and Landscape Architects, Inc. to provide the required services.

The consultant team kicked off the public participation portion of the project at the January 2003 Balboa Park Committee meeting. The Balboa Park Committee is acting as the steering committee for the project and is the host of all community meetings.

The project approach consists of four separate phases of work. Each phase of work will culminate in a public forum, where the findings of the phase are presented to the community as a whole. During each phase of work, numerous stakeholder interviews and workshops will be held to solicit the input of Balboa Park maintenance and operations staff, institutions and users.

Phase one of the project was the Discovery Phase. The consultant team has reviewed all applicable policy documents that govern Balboa Park, conducted numerous stakeholder interviews and walked the park to learn more about how the park functions. The consultants also reviewed existing and proposed plans both within and around Balboa Park that may have an impact on the Park. The findings of the Discovery Phase were reported to the Balboa Park Committee and the community at Public Forum No. One on April 3, 2003.

Phase two of the project was the Findings and Options Phase. The consultant team continued to conduct stakeholder interviews, and also held numerous workshops with Balboa Park organizations and institutions, community planning groups and City staff. The consultants used the information gathered in their previous efforts to generate separate options for addressing parking, circulation and land use. The options were then combined to create “scenarios”, or schematic plans, to provide a vision for the park. A total of three schematic plans were prepared for community input. The options and schematic plans were presented to the Balboa Park Committee and the community at Public Forum No. Two on July 10, 2003.

Phase three of the project is currently underway. This phase of the project consists of refinement of the schematic plans based on input at Public Forum No. Two. Additional workshops will be held with planning groups, institutions and City staff. Stakeholder interviews will also continue as needed. The refined schematic plans will be presented at Public Forum No. 3, which will be held on October 2, 2003. A preferred plan will be reviewed at the Public Forum, which will be modified for final recommendations at the fourth and final Public Forum in January, 2004. This portion of the planning effort will conclude with recommendations to the Land Use and Housing Committee in February, 2004.

The schematic plans will be reviewed by the Balboa Park Committee, the Park and Recreation Design Review Committee, the Park and Recreation Board, the Historical Resources Board Design Assistance Subcommittee, the Historical Resources Board, the Planning Commission and the Land Use and Housing Committee. Upon approval of the final schematic plan and identification of funding for Phase 2 of the study, the Park and Recreation Department will direct the consultant in the preparation of amendments or updates to the applicable policy documents that govern Balboa Park. These documents include the Balboa Park Master Plan, the Central Mesa Precise Plan, the Inspiration Point Precise Plan (not adopted), the East Mesa Precise Plan and all subsequent amendments to these documents.

Respectfully submitted,

April S. Penera
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